

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FURTHER GREEK PRESS REACTION TO HOUSE VOTE

ON TURKISH AID

REF: ATHENS 5625

1. SUMMARY: THE GOG HAS SAID NOTHING ABOUT THE HOUSE'S REJECTION OF THE TURKISH MILITARY AID BILL. MOREOVER, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HAVE REFUSED TO COMMENT WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE GOG MADE ANY DEMARCHES TO THE USG REGARDING REPORTS THAT USG SPOKESMEN HAD SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT DID NOT OPPOSE THE RESUMPTION OF MILITARY AID TO TURKEY. HOWEVER, REPORTS THAT THE USG CHASTIZED GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS FOR HIS STATEMENTS DURING LAST WEEK'S HOUSE DEBATE HAVE BEEN WIDELY REPORTED IN THE GREEK PRESS. SOME PAPERS SUGGEST THAT USG DISSATISFACTION WITH THE GREEK ROLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEFEAT OF THE BILL COULD LEAD IT TO SEEK A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN ATHENS.

THE PRESS HAS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION EDITORIALY WITH THE HOUSE DECISION. THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION THAT THE PRESS BELIEVES THAT GREEK INTERESTS MAY SUFFER AS A RESULT--RATHER EMPHASIS HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE FACT

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THAT THE USG WILL NOT BE ARMING THE TURKISH MENACE. WHILE THE

PRESS AND RADIO PLAYED UP SENATOR MANSFIELD'S COMMENTS THAT THE INTERESTS OF GREECE, CYPRUS, ISRAEL AND NATO WILL SUFFER IF THE HOUSE DECISION IS NOT REVERSED, THEY HAVE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED REPRESENTATIVE O'NEIL'S REMARKS REGARDING "BLACKMAIN" BY PRESIDENT FORD AND THE GOT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GOG HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL COMMENT ON THE HOUSE'S REFUSAL TO RENEW MILITARY AID SHIPMENTS TO TURKEY. IT HAS ALSO RESPONDED WITH "NO COMMENT" TO QUERIES FROM THE PRESS WHETHER IT MADE ANY REPRESENTATIONS TO THE USG REGARDING REPORTS THAT USG SPOKESMEN HAD TOLD CONGRESS THAT THE GOG DID NOT OBJECT TO THE RESUMPTION OF MILITARY AID TO TURKEY. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE COMMUNIST DAILY RIZOSPASTIS, ALL PAPERS CARRY REPORTS THAT THE DEPARTMENT CALLED IN AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS TO EXPRESS THE USG'S DISSATISFACTION WITH HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS LAST WEEK ON THIS SUBJECT.

3. THE HOUSE'S REFUSAL TO AUTHORIZE RESUMPTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY CONTINUED TO RECEIVE MAJOR MEDIA COVERAGE HERE OVER THE JULY 26-27 WEEKEND. THE CONGRESSIONAL DECISION WAS CELEBRATED EDITORIALY IN VIRTUALLY ALL PAPERS, THE ONLY EXCEPTION BEING THE COMMUNIST RIZOSPASTIS WHICH DID NOT COMMENT.

4. EDITORIAL COMMENT CENTERED ON THE CONCEPT THAT THE AID BILL WAS A TEST OF STRENGTH BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE CONGRESS, WITH ALL PAPERS CELEBRATING THE ASSERTION OF CONGRESSIONAL WILL. CONSERVATIVE KATHIMERINI'S RHAPSODY THAT THE CONGRESSIONAL VOTE REPRESENTED A "REVIVING OF THE ESSENCE OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HONOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THE CONGRESS" WAS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POSITION TAKEN BY EDITORIAL WRITERS.

5. NEWSPAPERS OF THE RIGHT, LEFT AND CENTER, ALSO WOVE INTO THEIR COMMENTARIES THAT THOUGHT THAT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WILL DENY THE TURKS ARMS WHICH THEY COULD USE AGAINST GREECE EITHER IN CYPRUS OR IN THE AEGEAN. LEFTIST ELEFTHROTYPIS (A NEW AFTERNOON DAILY) COMMENT THAT THE "FORD-KISSINGER-LUNS TROIKA HAS FAILED TO PLACE NEW ARMS IN THE HANDS OF ATTILA", PITHILY SUMMED UP THESE SENTIMENTS.

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6. EDITORIALS ALSO PICKED UP THE REPORTS OF THE USG DEMARCHE ON ALEXANDRAKIS' STATEMENTS. SEVERAL PAPERS COMMENTED TO THE EFFECT THAT ALEXANDRAKIS WAS ONLY PROTECTING GREEK INTERESTS. LIBERAL OPPOSITIONIST TO VIMA WENT FARTHER THAN MOST OTHERS WITH A STORY ON JULY 27 UNDER THE HEADLINE "WASHINGTON THREATENS SANCTIONS AGAINST GREECE: EVEN ON THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE." THE PAPER'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT REPORTED THAT THE

PRESIDENT, THE DEPARTMENT AND THE PENTAGON ARE VERY IRRITATED WITH THE GOG FOR THE ROLE THEY BELIEVE IT PLAYED IN THE DEFEAT OF THE AID BILL. THE PAPER'S CORRESPONDENT SUGGESTS THAT THE USG'S UNHAPPINESS COULD EVEN LEAD IT TO SEEK TO INTERVENE IN GREEK POLITICAL LIFE. TWO CONSERVATIVE AFTERNOON PAPERS REPLAYED THIS SAME THEME ON JULY 28.

7. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT EDITORIALISTS SHARE THE USG'S CONCERN THAT AS A RESULT OF THIS CONGRESSIONAL ACTION GREEK INTERESTS MAY BE COMPROMISED. IN FACT, SEVERAL TAKE SECRETARY KISSINGER TO TASK FOR HIS COMMENT THAT THE CONGRESSIONAL DECISION IS HARFUL TO GREECE. HOWEVER, SENATOR MANSFIELD'S SOBER REFLECTIONS ON THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON US, GREECE, ISRAEL, CYPRUS AND NATO ARE CARRIED IN MOST PAPERS. AT THE SAME TIME BOTH PRESS AND RADIO ARE NOW GIVING MAJOR COVERAGE TO THE REPORT THAT REPRESENTATIVE O'NEIL CHARACTERIZED PRESIDENT FORD'S AND TURKEY'S REACTION TO THE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION AS "PURE BLACKMAIL".
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